Government for fiscal year 2009 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2008 and 2010 through 2013, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

INVEST IN ENERGY INDEPENDENCE ACT OF 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in strong support of a piece of legislation that I recently introduced, H.R. 6067. It's called the Invest in Energy Independence Act.

Our Nation is at a crossroads, as we have been hearing tonight and on other of these Special Orders over the last several days and weeks. We know that we have a serious problem when it comes to our energy security. We rely too heavily, obviously, on foreign sources of energy, and we haven't done enough to promote the clean domestic energy sources that we have available right here in our backyards.

It's going to take every effort for us to find a whole multitude of sources of energy in order to address this energy crisis that we're facing as a Nation. I am hoping that we will not be shortsighted and think that only one particular area is the only solution to our problem; it's not.

The Invest in Energy Independence Act of 2008 takes a giant step forward in remedying this problem through responsible investment of over $1 billion in our energy future. This legislation before us today is vital in helping us become more secure in the world because it helps us develop our own energy resources in an environmentally responsible manner.

The Invest in Energy Independence Act invests heavily in domestic renewable energy resources such as wind, solar and geothermal, and it also helps us use the energy that we have more efficiently through key energy efficiency and weatherization measures.

Additionally, the Energy Security Fund established in the legislation will also fund carbon capture and storage technologies, which will help us significantly reduce future greenhouse gas emissions.

This legislation funds these vital projects through two main sources. First, it directs into the Energy Security Fund revenue from the prior sale of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve that is currently unused in a Department of Energy account. And secondly, it modernizes the strategic oil reserve by exchanging 70 million barrels, 10 percent, of more expensive light crude oil from the SPR, Strategic Petroleum Reserve, for 70 million barrels of cheaper, heavy crude oil in a step that will allow our stockpile of crude to more accurately reflect the capabilities of our domestic crude refineries.

Because the crude oil exchange will raise funds that will be set aside, about $84 million or so, for acquiring additional oil in the future, this legislation will actually increase the total inventory level of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve without the need for additional appropriations, further strengthening our energy supply against potential disruptions.

Now, this is a responsible and thoughtful manner in which to fund the most important energy projects throughout our country. By using funds from the past sale and future exchange of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to invest in clean, domestic energy projects, oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve will do exactly what it is intended: increase domestic energy supplies for the United States and secure the country from potential supply disruptions.

And so I hope I have many Members who will join me. There are already more than 30 who have agreed to cosponsor this legislation with me. I believe that it will strengthen our Nation's energy security by increasing domestic supplies and by modernizing our Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

One of the things that I know that has happened over the last several years is that there has been a dramatic decline in the amount of resources specifically budgeted for research for the Department of Energy. Their budget has declined by 85 percent in the last 30 years. Well, here is the time when we are in greatest need to be looking for every opportunity we can to learn of new ways that we can expand our sources of energy; yet we seem to be pulling in those opportunities to create those resources.

Those are the kinds of things that I think that it's critically important for our Science Committee, for all of us in Congress, to be looking at. It's what I have worked on as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy and Environment and I look forward to continuing to work on this legislation.

Well, we have an honorable gentleman, JOHN HALL, who is also one of the cosponsors of this legislation, and I welcome him in joining us tonight to come and talk about this legislation, and I would yield to Mr. HALL.

Mr. HALL of New York. I thank the gentleman, Mr. LAMPSON, and Mr. Speaker, it's an honor again to be here on the floor of the House of Representatives, but it's kind of another sad moment to think that the price of oil went to an unthinkable level again today, cresting over $129 per barrel.

Gas prices have more than doubled since 2001, and today, the average gas price in my State of New York is over $4. Oil dependence has become an untenable burden on our economy and a threat to our national security.

Skyrocketing gas prices we see climbing each day threaten to break family budgets that are already being devoured by the price of food, health care, higher education and consumer goods.

Breaking the grip of OPEC and Big Oil is something that our country must do to thrive and to survive in the 21st century. It's a big job that will take some time, and I'm proud to be here tonight to discuss one of the innovative solutions that the majority and this Congress is working on, the Invest in Energy Independence Act, which I'm proud to be a cosponsor of, and I thank my friend for cosponsoring and offering that bill.

I was talking to another Member at the back of the body when we were taking votes I think a few days ago and talking about this very thing. And you came up and said I happen to have a bill that addresses this problem of the Strategic Reserve absorbing 70,000 barrels a day over and over, day after day, taking them off the market, and creating that much more demand which is helping to drive up the price of oil.

This bill creates a win-win scenario for the American taxpayer. By redirecting through the release of oil from the SPR and restructuring its stockpile, the bill would help to put oil supply on the market to quell prices at the pump in the short-term, and this would also result in revenue to the Federal Government that does not come from increased taxes, which could be used to capitalize a fiscally responsible result and make sure that we take a more permanent action to end our oil addiction. We can't, as many of us have said, drill our way out of our problems.

The bill would invest that revenue in innovative research to develop clean, domestic sources of energy to power our economy. Ending our dependence on foreign oil has to be a top national priority, and to do so, we have to use every tool at our disposal.

Until recently, this administration has been violating the fundamental principle of buy low and sell high by taking oil off the market to fill the SPR at a time when prices were breaking new records and supplies were tight. Smart management of the SPR along the lines called for in Mr. LAMPSON's bill can make the reserve a powerful weapon in our battle against foreign oil dependence, and I strongly support you in this measure.

Mr. LAMPSON. Before you leave, let me just ask a question.

Surely, you heard some of the presentations made by our colleagues earlier talking about the need to increase drilling. What are your feelings about what these needs for our Nation are? Clearly, we must produce everything that we can produce, but isn't there more to the picture than just drilling as a solution?

Mr. HALL of New York. If the gentleman would yield?

Mr. LAMPSON. I would yield.

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you for asking that question.

If you read the comments by T. Boone Pickens on the front page of the

New York Times and other newspapers and magazines recently, he, one of the original oil tycoons and more successful ones, has said that he's more excited now about wind power than he is about any oil field he ever discovered.

Now, all people might not share his excitement. I talked to Ted Turner, who's been a media mogul and then head of record companies, broadcasting companies, Time Warner/AOL, I believe. I remember him back when he was sailing America's Cup yachts. He's certainly been around the world for a while. But today he said the thing he's most excited about as an investor and as a businessman is solar power.

And I see these men and women who have experience and have been observing commodities and observing economies and observing the way the world works and the direction it's going looking not just at drilling. I mean, obviously we're not going to get out of our dependence or our use of oil or liquid fuels anytime soon, especially for aviation.

As a member of the Aviation Subcommittee, I'm keenly aware of the fact that we might be able to move to electric vehicles, to hybrid, gas-electric or ethanol-electric or biodiesel hybrid, plug-in hybrid vehicles, et cetera, and combine these other technologies on the ground. But when we're talking about aircraft, especially I would say our Air Force, our military aircraft, we need to be able to develop and conserve liquid fuels and liquid petroleum fuels for those purposes and not burn them unnecessarily on the ground that we could use other technologies for.

So I would say that I agree to a point and I disagree to another point. The other problem with petroleum-based, carbon-based, fossil fuel technologies is that they're also emitting carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and accentuating the kind of climate change that we've seen.

I would say climate change resonates more with people than global warming, especially on a day like today in Washington where it's cool for late May. But we've seen the cyclone in Myanmar. We've seen the almost biblical flooding in Arkansas and Missouri and parts of our Midwest. My district in upstate New York has seen three 50-year floods in the last 5 years. We've seen Hurricane Katrina. We have seen droughts in the South and wildfires in Florida right now. We've seen the last couple of summers devastating fire seasons in the Western States and the Rocky States.

So, it's not just that the climate will be getting warmer and the glaciers or sea ice in the Arctic are disappearing but that the extremes of all kinds of weather, be they rain events or drought events, be they hot spells or cold spells, be they low pressure systems that turn into bigger tornados or bigger hurricanes or cyclones, that's what the computer models project. And the more we burn oil, the more we push ourselves down that road.

So, it helps us in a number of ways to look at these alternatives. First of all, for domestic, they are not sending our money overseas by the billions, especially borrowed money that we are getting from countries like China or Japan or other countries we're already hugely in debt to. They don't cause asthma and emphysema and acid rain and oil spills. They don't cause us to possibly be drawn into wars in unstable countries in unstable parts of the world that just happen to have oil.

So it's a win-win-win-win situation. Whether or not you believe that the climate is changing, the fact of the matter is if you can create jobs and create new technologies and new industries here in the United States, get us out of our balance of trade deficit and make the atmosphere cleaner at the same time, I'm happy.

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And I think a lot of Americans would be happy, too. I think it solves so many problems that it's clearly the direction our policy should be moving in. And I yield back.

Mr. LAMPSON. Reclaiming my time, so your point is very well made. You can't ignore the fact that we need to continue to rely on fossil fuels as we transition. And we must actually do what the United States Army told us to do in 1945, in a book they published on May 1, 1945, when they told us that it was necessary for this Nation to diversify away from our use of fossil fuels. And they told us how. And much of what they said then and much of what I believe our committees have said and what I believe this country is doing, and even the businesses, certainly like the smart people like T. Boone Pickens, who are looking at these diverse activities that we should be involved with that will give us new sources of energy.

We include in the legislation that we're talking about tonight significant funding for ARPA–E, which is advance research projects. And we talk about wind, solar, weatherization efficiencies, marine/hydrokinetic energy research, industrial energy efficiency. We have already passed many of these pieces of legislation as authorizing, and now we're looking for funding for it. Building energy efficiency, energy storage, batteries. We must find new ways to hold much of the energy that we are creating regardless of the manner in which we are creating the electricity to do it. Geothermal, carbon capture and storage, clearly it's a must if we're going to use some of the coal resources in this country. Natural gas, clean burning fuel, all of these are included in this legislation to be funded with the kinds of projects that will give us a much greater, diverse energy background. More energy storage, Smart Grid, and advanced vehicles research.

So I'm proud of the fact that we have so many people come together to bring us these kinds of projects that have already gone through, passed by this Congress. And I would like to know about the things that you have been specifically involved with, perhaps things that have been done in the State of New York, where you represent, very ably, the people in your congressional district.

I know that, for example, Texas has spent a great deal of time on wind energy. Arizona has spent a great deal of time on solar energy. Are there things that the State of New York is contributing to this mix of how we diversify our energy sources?

Mr. HALL of New York. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

In New York, in my district, as you suggest, there are a number of very exciting developments going on. We have a private business in Orange County, New York, which is currently taking all the solid waste on a pilot program, municipal solid waste—garbage, trash—not burning it, as the old incineration model would have us do, but separating it, pulling out the recyclables, pulling out the batteries and the cans of insecticide and the toxic substances that might be considered to be household hazardous waste, which, if you were to burn them, they would cause dioxin and heavy metals to go up the stack, and basically pollutants that can harm us and our children. Those things get pulled out and recycled. And what's left after the magnetic field pulls up the ferrous metals and magnetic metals and the shaker grate drops out the dirt and the stones, and so on, you're left with a combination of paper waste, wood waste, food waste, agriculture waste, all of which is gasified with hot sand as a catalyst under a patented process. And then that gas is used to spin a turbine and send, I believe, a couple of megawatts it is that they're generating out into the grid.

But the interesting thing about it is that the global warming gas emissions, the greenhouse gas emissions from this process are 75 percent less than if they put the same material in a landfill, which is what the town of Montgomery was doing before and what cities like New York City are doing. They're trucking municipal solid wastes, since the Fresh Kills landfill closed on Staten Island, to other States and buying space in landfills that are willing to accept it. And it's not cheap, especially with diesel and the price that it costs now, it's not cheap to send a roll-off truck with trash in it—or thousands of them a day—from a city like New York out to Ohio or Pennsylvania or wherever the latest landfill is, and then coming back empty, burning diesel fuel the whole way and sending those emissions into the air, too.

And when that material in the landfill decomposes, when the plant and vegetable matter decomposes, it creates methane, which is released through those J-shaped vents. If you drive past a landfill in your travels and you see those vents like upside-down

Js, what they're releasing into the atmosphere is methane. Methane is 20 times worse than carbon dioxide in terms of its greenhouse gas global warming impact.

So here's one idea, one project that can produce electricity, that can produce ethanol by the thousands of gallons, that can strip hydrogen, which is 48 percent of the gas that they produce out to charge hydrogen fuel cells, and it gets rid of municipal solid waste at 75 percent reduction in the greenhouse gas emission. So, very inventive project.

And I would say, at the other end of the spectrum, in terms of not just the size of the operation, but the funding that came to play, Newburgh High School in Newburgh, New York, Orange County, on the west bank of the Hudson, has a solar racing team which built a solar-powered car. They came to one of our workshops we did in the district on solar energy, it was packed—as all of our alternative energy forums are packed by people wanting to know what they can do. But the kids on the solar racing team included kids from the BOCES program, who are on the vocational track. And they knew how to weld and how to put together a car that would not fall apart on the road. And they included the advanced placement math students, who knew how to calculate how many square inches of photovoltaic cells they needed in order to generate the watts necessary so that they could power this vehicle, and the battery capacity.

And it looked about the size of this table here. It's actually an oval shape, maybe a little bit bigger than this, like a soapbox derby racer. And the student who drove it crouched down inside and had a little windshield in front of him to keep the bugs out of his face. And they won, or actually tied for first place, in a race from Houston, Texas to Newburgh, New York. Two thousand miles of this country they traveled with a top speed of 55 miles per hour. And when they showed up at our forum wearing ''Solar Racing Team'' hats and ''Solar Racing Team'' t-shirts and showing a video and the slide show of their car rolling across the highways from Texas to New York, the adults in the audience were so excited I think it woke up the little kid in them. They could hear about all the well-funded, high-science, high-technology things, but to see that these kids, with virtually no resources—the teacher adviser from the school was not allowed to touch the vehicle, it was entirely built by the kids. And the fact that they were high school students and were able to do this, even on a test, a display pilot project kind of scale, to build a vehicle that would do 2,000 miles, that would reach speeds of 55 miles per hour powered entirely on solar power and storing that power in batteries, the adults, as they were leaving, were asking me, why can't Detroit do this? And I answered, well, I think they can, but they're not.

And what we're trying to do through this bill, among other things, is to provide the incentives—and tomorrow, by the way, the House will pass sweeping tax incentives to provide not just corporations, but consumers, as well as businesses, with extended incentives for hybrid plug-ins for wind, solar, biofuels and marine energy.

And I know that there has been great concern around the country, and I've heard it from people in my district, about these renewable energy tax credits being extended. And what we're trying to do by doing that is to make it possible, not just for students in a high school, but for those who run our automobile manufacturing companies to be able to build cars that use these new technologies.

And with that, I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. LAMPSON. Well, you're so very right. And the ideas are not necessarily Democratic and they're not necessarily Republican ideas, they are American ideas.

We've got the knowledge. We've got the wherewithal. It's a matter of making sure that they have the opportunity to put that together. Too often, of late, we seem to have been pushing too many of our solutions to the political extremes, and we've got to find our way back toward the middle. And we think that this is a piece of legislation that does that. It recognizes that fossil fuels, much of what our colleagues earlier this evening were talking about as far as drilling activities, is not something that needs to be taken off the table. But at the same time, they can't tell us that the ideas that we're coming forward with are ideas that need to be taken off the table. We must look for diversity. We must look for balance.

We must look to encourage those kids who built that solar car and had the great success no differently than the college student that I spent some time with today, and I drove his hybrid vehicle. It was a group of universities who competed against each other to see if they could take regular vehicles and convert them into significantly greater, increased energy-efficient vehicles. The one that I saw today happened to have been a hybrid diesel engine that was placed into a General Motors SUV. I drove the car. It gets in the mid-30 range of miles per gallon of fuel. It meets all of the standards for emissions in our country.

So clearly, again, if college students can do it, if high school students can do it, the minds that have made the United States of America great are clearly here; they need the assistance to make sure that their ideas come to fruition and that we get to put them into the market.

There is a company that I'm working with in my congressional district in Texas who had the idea that they could make an external combustion engine. They're capturing it by creating a fire box that they attach to the outside of this engine. They are capturing the energy that is released in the combustion process and piping it into an engine, causing the compression activity to continue to the point where it causes the engine to move. There is great interest in this because it is twice as efficient as an internal combustion engine. Again, a good idea, one that was not a partisan idea, it was one that was developed by some guys that I have no idea what their political affiliations or interests are, but they're concerned about the United States of America and concerned about what we're going to be able to do to solve the energy crisis that we face.

This bill is intended to try to give them the encouragement, to give them the resources to make sure that we are doing everything that we possibly can to expand our opportunities to give greater sources of energy to all of us for our coming decades because we're clearly going to need them.

If we choose to spend all of our time—and I am certainly not the least bit concerned about drilling, I think that we must be continuing to produce fossil fuels and to use them as we have been, hopefully much cleaner than what we have been doing, but clearly that is only one part of this big picture that we have to address.

I want to talk for a minute about the renewable energy funding and just to make a point or two about the important strides in funding clean, renewable and, most importantly, domestic energy sources without impacting the Federal budget.

The Invest in Energy Independence Act, which is what we are talking about here tonight, provides $110 million for renewable energy research and development projects that include wind, solar, wave, geothermal, and hydrogen projects. The legislation pays for these projects. Clearly, this is something we're concerned about. We have PAYGO rules, pay-as-you-go. If we're going to put something new into our budget, then we must come up with the money to do it. This is a good way to do it.

So this legislation pays for these projects—and many other domestic research and development projects as well—through the modernization of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and use of available funds from prior sales of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The legislation modernizes the Strategic Petroleum Reserve by exchanging about 70 million barrels of more expensive light crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for an equivalent amount of less expensive heavy crude oil, a cost differential that ranges from about $12 a barrel up to about $18; most recently it's been about $15 per barrel. This exchange of light crude for heavy crude is necessary to have our petroleum reserve more accurately reflect the capabilities of our domestic refineries.

The Invest in Energy Independence Act is crucial to help move us away from our dependence on petroleum and

shift our use to affordable and reliable renewable energy sources that are available right here in the United States.

For instance, the legislation will invest an additional $15 million in wind energy, helping us to develop the next generation of wind turbines that can generate clean energy in virtually every corner of the country, even in those areas where there is relatively low wind speeds.

The bill also provides an additional $30 million through the Department of Energy for solar energy programs to conduct research, development, demonstration, and deployment of solar energy technologies. Funding these will also be available for our public education campaign on the virtues of clean domestic solar energy.

Well, for those of us who are fortunate enough to live in coastal areas, the bill invests $30 million in marine and hydrokinetic energy. The majority of Americans live in close proximity to oceans, and this legislation will help fund the next generation of clean wave energy to power our homes and our businesses.

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The Invest in Energy Independence Act also provides funding for geothermal energy projects. The legislation funds $30 million in geothermal research and development activities at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

And, finally, the bill advances hydrogen research and development by funding the Department of Energy's H-Prize program to reward researchers who are working to make our hydrogen economy a reality. The H-Prize program was authorized in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, but Congress hasn't funded it yet. Through this bill the program will receive $5 million that can be used to administer the program and reward successful researchers.

So, again, we're looking for our colleagues to come join us in the Invest in Energy Independence Act. It's these kinds of things that I believe will provide us with the funds necessary for clean, domestic, and renewable energy sources. That's what's going to give us the balance, the diversity, clearly broadening our whole range of sources of energy that we have available to us. And that's what's going to be the real solution to the energy crisis in the United States, making sure that we do the kinds of things that have always made this Nation great, developing the technology, encouraging our people to dream big dreams, and then make those dreams become reality.

But we're not going to do it if we continue to cut the research budgets of the Department of Energy or to discourage companies from putting money into research on their own. We need to find ways that we can extend the incentives that we are giving to many of these companies and have for a long time to try to jump-start new industries. I hope that we can find the wherewithal to make sure that we can look for all of these aspects. At the same time, we're going to give consumers a short-term benefit because we believe it will change the price of oil and consequently the price of gasoline at the pump who are feeling that pain. And, secondly, it gives us the longer-term benefit of increasing our access to alternative sources of energy.

Mr. HALL of New York. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LAMPSON. I yield.

Mr. HALL of New York. I thank you for your comments. And I would add to what you say, as I look at $100 million for ARPA-E, including $50 million for university research, $15 million for wind—and congratulations to you and the State of Texas on passing California in becoming the number one wind energy State in the country with more installed wind capacity than any of the other 49 States. By the way, I have to thank our President, George W. Bush, who signed a renewable energy standard when he was Governor of Texas, and that's partly why the wind is being exploited in Texas to the extent it is. I only wish that he would change his mind and sign the same renewable energy standard for the entire country now that he is President of the entire country.

But I look at this and the $30 million for solar and the $100 million for weatherization, et cetera, et cetera, and you know what I think of? Jobs. I think of jobs because when you put $100 million into weatherization of low-income housing, and I'm speaking as one who used to live in New York City, although I now live in Dutchess County in the Hudson Valley, there are so many old buildings in every city in this country that are poorly insulated, that have no storm windows or storm doors, that are leaky, that are leaking cool air in the summer when they're being air conditioned and leaking heat during the winter when there's actually a heating unit running, and what are you hiring? You're hiring trade people. You're hiring sheet metal workers. You're hiring carpenters. You're hiring installers. And in the process, you're saving barrels of oil or kilowatts, and a barrel of oil saved or a kilowatt saved has less environmental impact than any way you can generate a new barrel or a new kilowatt. So it's the cheapest way of getting a barrel or a kilowatt, and it also has the least environmental impact. So I'm very happy about the weatherization component of this.

Marine/hydrokinetic, we in New York are aware of the work that's been done recently by Verdant, Inc., a company that has been doing a test on six hydroturbines that are running below water in the East River, east of Roosevelt Island. As Long Island Sound, the western half, drains out through East River, under the Throgs Neck and the Whitestone and the Triborough Bridge, alongside the UN down the East River past Manhattan Island and through New York and out under the Verrazano-Narrows, half of Long Island Sound, millions of tons of water every day twice going out into the ocean and then back in through the harbor again. And that's what's being done by the action of the moon's gravitational effect on the ocean. And the fact that we are not harnessing that is just absurd. And their biggest problem, Verdant, Inc., in terms of putting in a hydrokinetic-generating station that use these turbines, there's so much force at work in the East River that it kept breaking the blades off the turbines, and they had to use titanium instead of steel and lessen the pitch so that there wasn't quite so much force on them to keep the turbines intact. Now, they're going back in, I believe, this year with a second round of more highly refined generators to test it again, but it's obvious that the power is there, whether it be wave action or whether it be tidal action or any of the other renewables that we are talking about. And if we can transition ourselves to these with whatever liquid fuels like, for instance, ethanol, I know that there are some problems with ethanol, but there's a surplus right now of ethanol in this country. I checked on the Internet last week. I just did a little Internet search and found that it's selling, as of the middle of last week, for $1.97 a gallon. That's half the cost of gasoline.

We had somebody call our office in Upstate New York, in Carmel, Putnam County, a woman constituent, who said, ''I'm so excited. I just bought a flex-fuel vehicle. Where can I get some flex-fuel?'' And my staff had to tell her there are two pumps in all of New York where you can buy flex-fuel. Well, West Point which is in my district, the United States Military Academy at West Point, where, I'm proud to say, my nephew is a cadet, just announced at our Board of Visitors meeting last week that they are planning to put in a 5,000 gallon underground tank for ethanol so that they can carry flex-fuel E-85 in the motor pool and at the commissary and start with a big quantity that's going to be used by that community of faculty and graduates and West Pointers who still live around the academy.

Mr. LAMPSON. Reclaiming my time, on that point, I know there is other research that is presently going on specifically to facilitate our military activities that would involve a number of alternative fuels. I know of a specific project that is being tested right now with the use of Air Force turbine generators to use biofuels, specifically animal fats as well as some of the oils that come from some of the nonedible plants that are growing. These are the kinds of things that are going to make our country continue to be great. We need to encourage those activities as much as we possibly can.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HALL of New York. I don't know how much time we have left, my friend, but I just wanted to say once again

that I support the Invest in Energy Independence Act and am doing my best to convince more Members of this body on both sides of the aisle to support it. I believe that it will help to ease market tensions. It will help to keep the price of gasoline from rising too much higher and hopefully eventually to bring it back to more affordable levels by providing competition with other kinds of fuels and other kinds of energy.

And when that day arrives, Mr. LAMPSON, when that day arrives that we can tell the Saudis or the Russians or whichever country it is that's shipping imported oil into this country ''No thank you, you can turn your tanker around and send it somewhere else,'' that day a big weight will lift off the shoulders of America, off the American public. And I believe it will be a moment similar to the day when we first landed on moon.

Because I was a kid when Sputnik was launched, and I remember the feeling of this thing. It was beeping overhead, that the Russians had gotten to it first. And it didn't really do anything other than beep. But the fact it was there above us was symbolic of, we thought and we probably were right, a technological breakthrough that another country had made that put them for the time being ahead of us in that field. And I believe that we can't afford to let Japan or China or any other country get more of a lead in energy than the one that exists now. And the day that we are once again able to throw our shoulders back, hold our heads high, and say that we can fuel our own economy and our own industry and our own recreation and our own family's trips to and from work and from school and so on without depending on some other country that might have policies and human rights or other things that we don't like but we have to sort of bow to them and ignore that aspect of foreign policy because we need something that they have, that will be not just energy independence, it will be independence.

We're talking about sovereignty here, and I think that will be a day that Americans together, regardless of party or no party at all, if they're paying attention, all Americans on that day will be proud to be Americans. Not that we aren't proud now, but we will be proud of an accomplishment that will be uniquely American and something that I believe we will accomplish and that we have to look forward to.

Mr. LAMPSON. Beautifully stated and I totally agree.

You made the comment that you would hope that the President would sign into law the work that we would do whether it's wind or some of the other alternative energies, and I truly believe that he will when he sees that this Congress is choosing to work together. When we start putting aside the blame from one to the other and that we know that we are all in one boat in this country right now and our boat has a hole in it, if we don't all start bailing water together, we are going to sink and we will sink together. But we clearly have the knowledge. We have the intellect. We have the future with our children who are doing excellent things in their educational programs. We have to present them with the dreams and the wherewithal to make those dreams come true. It's exactly what we did following Sputnik in 1957. We responded with a resounding response to the challenge of President John Kennedy at the time.

And I have to agree with you. Our technological leadership will be there. If we will but make these things available to our young people, they'll solve our problems for us, and this bill certainly does that.

China and India are examples as well as Japan and a number of other places are, in my opinion, the beeps of Sputnik of today. Japan put a satellite not too long ago in orbit around the moon. China has set its goals to have a colony on the moon before the United States even returns to the moon. And we are going into a period soon where we won't even have the ability to launch a human into space because we're going to have a gap of 5 years from the time that we end the use of space shuttle in 2010 to the time that we have the constellation project up and running in 2015. That is a question of national security, in my estimation, no different than the question of energy security for our country. So we have got to maintain our technological advantage. That's what's going to help us maintain the standard of living. It's what's going to help us continue to encourage young people to stay in school to learn the math and the science and the engineering kinds of courses that will maintain the path that America traveled to its greatness and will make sure that we have that same greatness well into our future.

And I see that the gentlewoman from Houston, Texas, has joined us, SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, and I yield to her.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Houston, the distinguished chairman. And I am delighted to be here with the distinguished congressman from New York (Mr. HALL).

I really appreciated listening to the diversity of the debate on energy, from the far northern parts of New York to the gulf States of Texas and, I might add, Louisiana because we have a number of Louisiana residents, of course, now making their home in Texas, and many of them happen to have worked in the energy industry, of course, and came to Houston because of the difficulty and the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina and then ultimately Hurricane Rita.

We know, interestingly enough, Mr. HALL, and I am sort of sidestepping here for a moment, that a number of rigs in the gulf suffered the consequences of Hurricane Katrina. And I think we should go on record to note, because I happen to believe in a diverse energy policy, that I am going to say all of them, and I have not heard a counter to this, managed to withstand Hurricane Katrina without an oil leak. And I only say that to say that those of us in the gulf have experienced off of our shores, and again we speak specifically to offshore work off of the gulf, environmentally safe drilling. And I say that because as we listen to those of us who come from different parts of the country, I think we can get an energy policy that fits us all.

I have listened to your discussion. I don't think that we necessarily need to intrude on the Outer Continental Shelf. Off the East Coast there is opposition. Maybe in time. I know there is opposition off the coast of Florida. There is opposition off the coast of California. I heard you talk about hydropower that works or would work very well. I guess I'm reminded of Niagara Falls. I got a chance to see that to see the power of water and energy that could be utilized and as well the energy that maybe I'm more familiar with.

□ 2030

That is why I think the thoughtful legislation of my good friend from Texas, the Invest in Energy Independence Act, H.R. 6067, which I am going to encourage all of my colleagues to join, and let me tell you why, Mr. LAMPSON. I think you really hit the nail on the head. I think we did this together when I was on the Science Committee and you were on the Science Committee when we tried to advocate for NASA. We tried to sell it not so much as it's a program to send people into space, but how it helps our daily lives.

Many people don't know what the Strategic Petroleum Reserve is all about. What is that foreign entity, SPR? Is it some kind of unfortunate disease? But it is an existing entity that sits amongst us. Really, I don't think this administration has taken advantage of it because I don't think it would offend our environmentalists, our colleagues from California, our colleagues from Arizona, our colleagues from New York, because it is existing petroleum.

Of course, our Speaker has been more eloquent or most eloquent about releasing the resources from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help us, and that is barrels of oil that are sitting there in case of danger, in case of terrorist acts, in case of an attack against the United States, we would have it.

But what Mr. LAMPSON has determined is that this is filled up with light and medium crude, and our refineries, I think some 36 of our refineries out of 74, deal with heavy crude. And so part of your bill suggests that we put heavy crude in.

Let me tell you why this is important. That is really the bottom line of why our immediate problems of dealing

with gasoline prices. It's all about supply and demand, it's all about refineries being old and antiquated and can't get their product out. That is one of the pieces of it. I don't want to suggest that I don't believe in conservation or diversity, because I'm going to get to that point. But having been an oil and gas lawyer for a period of time, I realize that we have got to look through a broad lens. And part of the problem is the opposition that we have given to building refineries.

But it's not only the problem of the United States Congress. Frankly, Mr. LAMPSON, it is the problem of tunnel vision energy industry that gives the industry a bad name, the oil and gas industry, that really has not sat down with this Congress or opened up options. Whenever we talk about the price per barrel of oil or talk about high gasoline prices, our good friends in the energy industry, particularly oil and gas, do tunnel vision. They say, I've got mine; you get yours. I've got my high profits, I've got my shareholders happy with me, and I am not going to look at any idea.

I think the Energy Independence Act causes them to look at other ideas but also may draw them out because I don't know how long Americans are going to continue to accept these accelerating prices. I saw a scenario on CNN that really said that we might be paying $8 or $9 or $10.

This, I hope, is a legislative initiative that really calls our energy barons to sit down and say, Let me listen to Mr. HALL from New York about hydro. Maybe my company is named energy for the very fact that it should be diverse. That the energy industry should be investing in hydro. You are giving the opportunity through utilizing the $574 million or $584 million that is now in the Department of Energy's account. I don't know how many people know we have got $584 million sitting around and moms and pops who are trying to go back and forth to schools or trying to get to work or trying to get on vacation for the free days that they can, drive to grandma's house, because that's about all the vacation people will be getting this summer, probably, are sitting around in an account.

And so this bill, I believe, is important because it throws the onus back on thinking people about how we can be creative in energy. What it does, of course, is ARPA, which deals with R&D, but Texas is the near capital of wind energy. We don't even get touted for that. No one celebrates the fact that we have got wind energy. I sat down with an energy company, a wind energy company, and let me not speak too quickly, but I was saying how can I get in the middle of this. It was fascinating that these guys are building windmills and creating energy right in the United States, in Texas. We don't know that. Oil and gas State.

Solar energy. What kind of jobs can be created by solar. First of all, you can get everybody to get a panel in their house. That is putting people to work. I mean the solar panels. Get your roof redone and that is putting people to work. Weatherization for my seniors. If we can ever get people to understand the importance of weatherizing houses, older houses, East Coast houses. My daughter worked in Albany so, my friend, it can get pretty cold in the upper parts of New York. Weatherization of your oldest stock of houses because it's a State that was one of the 13 colonies. It has older products. So the weatherization part of it is so important.

And then, of course, working with hydrokinetic and marine, you add that $30 million. But what I think this should do most of all, Congressmen, is wake up this industry. If I might, let me cite some numbers here so that I can speak to what we are afraid to speak to, and I just think we have to get to.

The U.S. Minerals Management Service indicates that America's deep seas on the Outer Continental Shelf, the OCS, contain 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. The U.S. consumes only 23 TCF per year. So this is 420 trillion already sitting there, already on the U.S. side of the world, already ours, in essence, and 86 billion barrels of oil. The U.S. imports 4.5 billion a year. So, in essence, it would keep us going for a couple of years. Even with all these energy resources, the United States sends more than $300 billion and countless American jobs overseas. That's $300 billion and countless American jobs overseas.

We do that, unfortunately, because we don't know how to frame our domestic energy policy. This frames it. But I want to speak vocally for the fact that I am not in opposition and the Members of Congress and the constituents of the region are not in opposition to the exploration of the Gulf. We have done it quietly. We haven't bothered anybody about it. We are not interested in disrupting the Outer Continental Shelf off of New York, off of Florida, or California.

But we have not promoted domestic production in that area by giving incentives, by doing more R&D so that we can be more environmentally safe so I can give comfort to my colleagues who, rightly so, speak to the environment. We keep focused on ANWR. We know how divisive that is rather than getting our attention as Republicans and Democrats and Independents about where it is welcomed. At the same time, to take the R&D and use it for hydro and to be able to use it for wind and solar, which I have gotten enormously excited about because I think it is a place for small businesses, minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses. What a way to put people to work, by getting this vast amount of diversity into the energy business so it's not just the conglomerates to refuse to sit down with us.

I want to take just a moment to pay tribute to John Hofmeister of Shell because if there has ever been a face for energy, it has been John Hofmeister. He has been unafraid; he has gone to places where he has been booed and applauded. But he has taken his ship on the road, or his bus on the road, his whole tour on the road, talking about the idea of how we can sit down and develop an energy plan.

Let me conclude by suggesting that, first of all, the United States imports nearly 60 percent of the oil it consumes. The world's greatest petroleum reserves reside in the regions of high geopolitical risk, including 57 percent in the Persian Gulf. So we import from a high-risk area. And yet, we have 86 billion barrels of oil here in the United States, or in reserves in the United States, or in places that have not yet been explored. And we have 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Why then can we not construct an energy policy that embraces the concept of energy independence.

With all due respect, why can't we get cellulosic ethanol off of the bean, if you will, with your research dollars to kick it into a full press to make it work. We recognize and respect our friends who are using ethanol. But just think if we can get cellulosic from just being a ''pie in the sky,'' we could also do the right kind of thing.

So, Mr. LAMPSON, and to Mr. HALL, let me thank you for inviting me and allowing me to join you. I couldn't help but hear such thoughtful discussion about why we can't move forward on legislation like this that would embrace all of our constituencies and regions under one umbrella. We would make everyone happy, from solar, to wind, to the environmentalists, and to people like me, who, frankly, are in the environmentalist skin, who support the concepts of what we are doing as Democrats, what our leadership is trying to do, letting us become independent. Yet, this brings the balance. Because I believe that we should not throw away the value of natural gas that exists here or the oil that exists here in the United States in safe waters in areas where the constituency believe that it is acceptable to do. It creates jobs, it creates safety, and I think the Energy Independence Act, H.R. 6067, let's all of us get a piece of the pie.

It is an important step forward. I look forward to supporting it, but I also hope that my energy leaders of the various companies, who someone may be looking at this, realize that I think that they are having tunnel vision, I think they are wrong for not engaging us, I think they are wrong for not engaging the Members of Congress who happen to be Democrats, who happen to be in their areas, and they know who I'm speaking of, and they know they have not done it, they know they are wrong, and they know they are wrong on behalf of the American people because they know the American people are going every day to their gas stations, their brand and buying it and being upset and not getting relief.

I think the energy companies who have been blessed by the safety and security of this Nation owe to the United States and to its people a consensus discussion and a friendly discussion on how we can move this country forward.

With that, I yield to the distinguished gentleman.

Mr. LAMPSON. I thank the gentlelady for joining us and for her thoughtful comments. A couple of the things that you said, one particularly comes to mind, on weatherization. Mayor Bill White in Houston Texas tried a pilot project that was an overwhelming success by helping those people who could make small change, couldn't afford to make them but the city chose to make them on their own, and got back several times the value that was invested in those homes to bring them up to currency. Those are the kinds of things that we need and want to do with this legislation.

The wind energy about which you spoke, we need also not just to have the better technology with the stronger, lighter materials to have the blades of the windmills, but we also need the materials that will give us the batteries to store the energy that is created when those turbines are turned.

Dow Chemical. Unfortunately, we could have seen a significant increase in the facility of Dow Chemical right there in our backyard in southeast Texas. Yet, they chose to go to another country because it was access to alternative sources of materials that they could use. In that case, they were trying to continue to make plastics, and they are making plastics from biomass.

Those are the kind of things that are addressed in this legislation. It's a matter of using, strategically using, the strategic petroleum reserve effectively, and strategically, if I can repeat that word yet again, to include our overall energy supply. We truly are. We are reaching an emergency situation. Leaving the strategic petroleum reserve alone exactly the way it is now, if we had to turn to it if we lost our sources of oil coming into the country and going into those refineries, we would see an 11 percent decline of gasoline production immediately and we would see a 35 decline in diesel fuel immediately just because of a lack of modernization.

So if we act and allow some part of this reserve to contain heavy crude, as opposed to light, we would see a lesser change in conversion of being able to rely on those strategically placed oil reserves. This is a good piece of legislation. It's one that has been thoughtful to draw in Members from different places in the country, to pull in Members from both parties, Democrat and Republican.

We think that there are significant opportunities for us to do a couple of things. One, as I said earlier, we would have a short-term benefit because we would very likely see a decline in the price of oil, the price of gasoline because of dumping significant quantities of oil into the market in a strategic way. Once we have the resources generated from the differential in light crude and heavy crude, we will be able to invest those very sources very effectively in already authorized research projects that have passed this Congress already.

□ 2045

So Members, Democrat and Republican, want these projects to be funded and to be put into place. This is the way to make that happen.

I am proud of this legislation. I am proud of Mr. HALL from New York for joining us and Ms. JACKSON-LEE from Houston, Texas, for joining us tonight to talk about it. I look forward to working with our colleagues to make it yet stronger and achieve the real balance that we want to achieve for energy for the security of the United States of America. I thank you for joining me.

ENERGY POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank you for recognizing me to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

As a means of transition, and in fact it is not normal practice, but I would ask the gentleman from Texas if he might still be available to perhaps enter into a colloquy. If the gentleman from Texas would be interested in entering into a colloquy, I would be happy to ask him if he would yield for a question. I have been interested in listening to the presentations by the folks here, and I would ask if the gentleman from Texas would be willing to enter into a short colloquy just as a matter of clarification on our energy position?

Mr. LAMPSON. I absolutely would.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Thank you. And I know you have been here on the floor talking about energy for the last hour. Just as a matter of transition, I would just ask a few clarifying questions.

The first one is, as I heard discussion about the Outer Continental Shelf, is there a nuance there? Are you for or against drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf for more energy?

Mr. LAMPSON. I personally am not opposed to drilling. I think that drilling is only one of many solutions to our problem. What I am trying to concentrate on is a whole host of research projects that have already been passed by the Congress.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time then, drilling the Outer Continental Shelf is part of the solution. We would agree on that?

Mr. LAMPSON. I would say that everything we can think of is a part of the solution. We shouldn't take anything off of the table. We are in an energy crisis and we must be considering every opportunity that we possibly have facing us.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I appreciate that response from the gentleman from Texas. So as we go down through this list of things that we might do, drilling the Outer Continental Shelf would be on the table. Drilling ANWR is on the table?

Mr. LAMPSON. I say everything needs to be on the table for discussion, yes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Let me just if I could then thank the gentleman and go through a list of things that I think that we should engage expand the supply of energy. Drill the Outer Continental Shelf, gas and oil. Drill ANWR. Open up nuclear. Drill non-national park public lands. Expand ethanol, biodiesel, solar, wind, clean burning coal. And then out of this whole piece of the energy pie, then add another slice to that, which I presume you have talked about tonight, and that would be the slice called conservation.

Would that be the picture you are looking at that I think I heard as I listened to your presentation tonight?

Mr. LAMPSON. Most of what you just mentioned is in this legislation.

Mr. KING of Iowa. So for those reasons I asked for those clarifications, that helps me in my transition as I go into the presentation that I hope to make tonight on energy. I just want to make those clarifications, because it does provide for a transition for us, and it also identifies some common ground that we have.

I would state to the gentleman from Texas that my view is that the free market does prevail and that more Btus of energy on the market will help to hold down the increase in prices, and, if all goes well, to actually reduce those prices of energy. That is the approach that we should be able to arrive at in a bipartisan fashion. If the gentleman would agree?

Mr. LAMPSON. Absolutely. If the gentleman would yield, that is precisely what I have been working on since November to get Members to join us with on this. We have taken any number of suggestions to change this legislation to accommodate different Members and different Members' thoughts about how we go about making this bipartisan, and the successful way to greatly expand the diversity of what we are using for energy this country.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Would the gentleman yield for just a moment?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I would yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. As I indicated on the floor, I am an oil and gas lawyer and obviously have a broadened perspective. But I would like to just say that I hope that even as you are presenting your presentation, that you heard what I said, which is I think that the energy leaders of the respective multinational companies that are in the United States need to sit down